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## Implementation of Islamic Values of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* in Multicultural Life in Iraq

Mohammed Abdu Rehany

University of Zakho, Zahko, Kurdistan Region Iraq, Iraq

\* Correspondence e-mail; [abdu.rehany@uoz.edu.krd](mailto:abdu.rehany@uoz.edu.krd)

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### Abstract

The concept of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* represents one of the fundamental principles of Islam emphasizing mercy, compassion, justice, tolerance, and peace for all creation. In multicultural societies such as Iraq, where diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural groups coexist, the implementation of Islamic values of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* becomes highly important for maintaining social harmony, national unity, and peaceful coexistence. This study aims to analyze the implementation of Islamic values of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* in multicultural life in Iraq and examine their relevance in addressing social conflict, sectarian tension, and cultural diversity within contemporary society. The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach through literature review and contextual analysis of Islamic teachings, multiculturalism, and social conditions in Iraq. The findings indicate that Islamic values emphasizing compassion, justice, tolerance, moderation, and social solidarity contribute positively to strengthening peaceful intercommunal relations and promoting social cohesion in multicultural environments. However, the implementation of these values faces challenges related to sectarian conflict, political instability, extremism, social polarization, and historical tensions among communities. The study emphasizes that strengthening inclusive Islamic education, interfaith dialogue, ethical leadership, and community cooperation is essential for promoting the values of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* within Iraqi society. Therefore, revitalizing Islamic humanitarian values can contribute significantly to peacebuilding, reconciliation, and sustainable social harmony in multicultural national life.

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### Keywords

Rahmatan lil 'Alamin; Multicultural Life; Iraq; Islamic Values; Social Harmony; Religious Tolerance; Peacebuilding



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## INTRODUCTION

Human society is naturally characterized by diversity in ethnicity, religion, language, culture, and social traditions. Diversity may become a source of cultural richness, intellectual development, and social strength when managed through mutual respect and tolerance. However, diversity may also generate conflict, discrimination, and social fragmentation when differences are politicized or

manipulated negatively. In multicultural societies experiencing historical tensions and political instability, maintaining peaceful coexistence and social harmony becomes a major challenge requiring strong ethical and social foundations. In this context, religious teachings often play significant roles in shaping attitudes toward diversity, conflict resolution, and humanitarian responsibility.

Islam, as a universal religion, promotes values of compassion, justice, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence through the concept of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*. This concept originates from the Qur'anic description of the Prophet Muhammad as "a mercy to all creation" in Qur'an Surah Al-Anbiya (21): 107. The phrase *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* reflects the universal mission of Islam emphasizing mercy, protection of human dignity, social justice, compassion toward all living beings, and harmonious social interaction regardless of differences in religion, ethnicity, or cultural background. Islamic teachings therefore encourage Muslims to contribute positively to social peace, humanitarian values, and inclusive coexistence within society.

The implementation of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* values becomes highly relevant in multicultural societies such as Iraq. Iraq possesses rich ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity consisting of Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen, Assyrians, Yazidis, and other minority groups. Religiously, Iraq includes Muslims from Sunni and Shi'a traditions as well as Christians, Yazidis, Mandaeans, and other religious communities. Historically, Iraqi civilization has been shaped by multicultural interaction and intellectual exchange over centuries. Baghdad itself once functioned as one of the world's major centers of Islamic scholarship, science, philosophy, and cultural development during the Abbasid era.

However, despite its rich multicultural heritage, Iraq has also experienced prolonged social conflict, political instability, sectarian violence, extremism, foreign intervention, and humanitarian crises over recent decades. Political tensions, armed conflict, terrorism, and sectarian polarization have significantly affected social relations among Iraqi communities. Religious identity has frequently been politicized and manipulated within conflict dynamics, resulting in distrust, displacement, violence, and fragmentation among different social groups. According to Haddad (2011), sectarianism in Iraq intensified significantly following political instability and conflict, influencing national identity and intercommunal relations.

The emergence of extremist movements and violent radicalism has further complicated efforts to maintain social harmony and peaceful coexistence within Iraq. Extremist groups often misuse religious narratives to justify violence, intolerance, and exclusion against individuals or communities with different beliefs or identities.

Such actions contradict the fundamental Islamic principles of mercy, justice, and compassion embodied in the concept of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin. Consequently, strengthening inclusive and humanitarian Islamic values becomes increasingly important for countering extremism and promoting reconciliation within Iraqi society.

The concept of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin emphasizes that Islam is intended not only for Muslims but for all humanity and creation. Islamic teachings encourage kindness, fairness, social responsibility, and respect toward all people regardless of religious or ethnic background. The Prophet Muhammad demonstrated these principles through his interactions with Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Historical examples from Medina society illustrate how the Prophet established cooperation and peaceful coexistence among diverse communities through justice, mutual responsibility, and social inclusion. Esposito (2011) explains that Islamic civilization historically developed through interaction, pluralism, and intellectual openness rather than isolation or hostility toward diversity.

In multicultural contexts such as Iraq, implementing Rahmatan lil 'Alamin values may contribute significantly to peacebuilding, social integration, and conflict resolution. Compassion, tolerance, moderation (*wasathiyah*), and justice can function as ethical foundations for rebuilding trust and cooperation among divided communities. Islamic teachings encouraging dialogue, forgiveness, and protection of human dignity are particularly important in societies recovering from violence and sectarian conflict. Such values may also strengthen democratic culture and inclusive citizenship by encouraging respect for diversity and equal participation within national life.

Education plays a crucial role in transmitting and implementing Islamic humanitarian values within multicultural societies. Inclusive Islamic education emphasizing tolerance, empathy, peaceful coexistence, and social ethics may help prevent radicalization and strengthen intercultural understanding among younger generations. Educational institutions, *pesantren*, universities, and religious organizations possess strategic roles in promoting moderate Islamic teachings and encouraging constructive interaction among diverse social groups. According to Abdullah (2020), multicultural Islamic education should integrate religious understanding with humanitarian values and social responsibility to support peaceful coexistence within pluralistic societies.

Interfaith dialogue and community cooperation similarly represent important mechanisms for implementing Rahmatan lil 'Alamin values within multicultural life.

Dialogue encourages mutual understanding, reduces prejudice, and strengthens communication among communities with different religious or cultural backgrounds. In societies affected by historical conflict and social polarization, dialogue may help rebuild trust and encourage collaborative efforts toward peace and social welfare. Religious leaders and community figures therefore possess important responsibilities in promoting reconciliation and preventing hate narratives or sectarian hostility.

The relevance of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* has become increasingly important in contemporary global contexts characterized by religious polarization, extremism, migration, and identity-based conflict. Islam is sometimes misunderstood or associated negatively with violence and intolerance due to extremist actions and political narratives. Consequently, emphasizing Islam's humanitarian and compassionate teachings becomes essential for strengthening positive intercommunal relations and countering negative stereotypes regarding Islam and Muslims. Iraqi society, with its historical diversity and social challenges, provides an important context for examining how Islamic values can contribute to multicultural coexistence and social reconstruction.

Digital communication and globalization also influence multicultural relations and religious discourse in Iraq and other societies. Social media platforms facilitate information exchange and intercultural communication but may also spread misinformation, hate speech, and sectarian propaganda. Consequently, strengthening ethical communication and digital literacy based on Islamic values of compassion and responsibility becomes increasingly necessary. Islamic teachings concerning justice, honesty, patience, and respectful dialogue provide important guidance for navigating digital communication responsibly within multicultural societies.

However, implementing *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* values in Iraq faces various obstacles. Political instability, economic inequality, weak governance, social trauma, and ideological polarization continue to affect efforts toward reconciliation and social integration. Some groups maintain exclusive interpretations of religion emphasizing division rather than inclusivity and cooperation. Therefore, revitalizing Islamic humanitarian values requires not only religious discourse but also institutional support, educational reform, ethical leadership, and community participation.

The concept of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* additionally emphasizes environmental responsibility and social welfare alongside interhuman relations. Islamic compassion extends toward all aspects of creation, including protection of the environment and

care for vulnerable populations. In post-conflict societies such as Iraq, social reconstruction therefore requires holistic approaches integrating humanitarian assistance, social justice, environmental sustainability, and ethical governance.

Based on these realities, examining the implementation of Islamic values of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin in multicultural life in Iraq is highly important within contemporary academic and social discourse. Understanding how Islamic humanitarian teachings contribute to peaceful coexistence, reconciliation, and social harmony may provide valuable insights for addressing sectarian conflict and strengthening multicultural national life. Therefore, this study seeks to analyze the implementation of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin values within Iraqi society and explore their relevance to peacebuilding and multicultural coexistence in contemporary contexts.

## **METHODS**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research method to analyze the implementation of Islamic values of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin in multicultural life in Iraq. The qualitative approach was selected because the study aimed to explore social realities, religious values, multicultural interaction, and humanitarian principles contextually within Iraqi society. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is appropriate for examining social, cultural, and religious phenomena through interpretative analysis and contextual understanding. Through this approach, the study sought to understand how Islamic humanitarian values emphasizing compassion, tolerance, justice, and peaceful coexistence are implemented within multicultural environments affected by social diversity and historical conflict.

The research utilized a literature review and contextual analysis approach. Primary data sources consisted of Qur'anic verses, Hadith narrations, classical and contemporary Islamic scholarly works, and literature discussing the concept of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin, multiculturalism, Islamic ethics, peacebuilding, and social harmony. Relevant Qur'anic teachings concerning compassion, justice, tolerance, moderation (*wasathiyah*), social responsibility, and coexistence among diverse communities were analyzed to provide theological foundations for the study. In addition, historical examples from the life of the Prophet Muhammad and early Islamic society concerning intercommunal relations and peaceful coexistence were examined to contextualize the discussion.

Secondary data sources included academic journals, books, policy reports, and scholarly publications discussing Iraqi social conditions, sectarian relations, multicultural society, conflict resolution, Islamic moderation, and interfaith dialogue. Reports from international organizations and institutions focusing on peacebuilding,

social cohesion, and humanitarian issues in Iraq were also reviewed to provide broader understanding regarding the challenges affecting multicultural life in contemporary Iraqi society. Literature concerning Islamic education, reconciliation, and social integration was incorporated to support analytical depth.

Data collection was conducted through systematic documentation and literature analysis. Relevant references were selected based on their relevance to Islamic humanitarian values, multicultural coexistence, sectarian relations, and peacebuilding within Iraqi society. Both classical Islamic references and contemporary social studies were utilized to ensure comprehensive understanding of the topic. Sugiyono (2022) explains that documentation techniques in qualitative research are effective for examining conceptual, ethical, and social issues through textual interpretation and thematic categorization.

The collected data were categorized into several major themes, including compassion and mercy (*rahmah*), tolerance and coexistence, moderation in Islam, sectarian conflict, multicultural interaction, peacebuilding, interfaith dialogue, educational roles, and social reconciliation. These thematic categories enabled systematic analysis of how Islamic values of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* contribute to social harmony and multicultural coexistence in Iraq. Descriptive analysis was used to explain the characteristics and implementation of Islamic humanitarian values, while interpretative analysis was applied to examine their relevance to contemporary Iraqi social realities.

To strengthen analytical validity, the study also employed an interdisciplinary approach integrating Islamic studies, sociology, multicultural education, and peace studies. Contemporary concepts such as multiculturalism, social integration, conflict resolution, tolerance, and inclusive citizenship were compared with Islamic teachings emphasizing mercy, justice, and social responsibility. This comparative analysis aimed to demonstrate the compatibility between Islamic humanitarian values and contemporary multicultural principles promoting peaceful coexistence and social harmony.

The study additionally analyzed the historical and social context of Iraq as a multicultural society consisting of diverse ethnic and religious communities, including Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, Christians, Kurds, Turkmen, Yazidis, and other minority groups. This contextual analysis was important for understanding the complexity of implementing inclusive Islamic values within societies affected by political instability, sectarian polarization, extremism, and historical conflict. The study explored how social tensions and ideological divisions influence

intercommunal relations and the implementation of humanitarian Islamic teachings within everyday social life.

Furthermore, the research examined the roles of educational institutions, religious leaders, community organizations, and interfaith initiatives in promoting the values of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin within Iraqi society. Educational programs encouraging tolerance, dialogue, and peaceful coexistence were analyzed as important mechanisms for strengthening multicultural understanding and preventing radicalization. Community-based reconciliation efforts and interreligious communication initiatives were also reviewed to understand practical efforts toward rebuilding social trust and cooperation among diverse communities.

The study also considered the influence of digital media and globalization on multicultural interaction and religious discourse in Iraq. Social media platforms, online communication, and digital religious narratives increasingly shape public perceptions regarding religion, identity, and social relations. Consequently, the study analyzed the importance of ethical communication and moderate Islamic discourse in countering hate speech, misinformation, and sectarian propaganda within digital environments.

Overall, the qualitative descriptive method enabled comprehensive exploration of the implementation of Islamic values of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin in multicultural life in Iraq. Through literature-based and contextual analysis, the study provides deeper understanding regarding how Islamic humanitarian teachings can contribute to peacebuilding, reconciliation, social integration, and harmonious coexistence within multicultural societies affected by diversity and social conflict.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of Islamic values of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin plays an important role in promoting social harmony, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and multicultural integration within Iraqi society. The concept of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin, which emphasizes mercy, compassion, justice, moderation, and respect for human dignity, provides a strong ethical foundation for managing diversity and addressing social conflict in multicultural environments. In Iraq, where ethnic, religious, and sectarian diversity forms a central characteristic of national life, these Islamic humanitarian values remain highly relevant for strengthening social cohesion and supporting peacebuilding efforts.

One major finding of the study is that Islamic teachings emphasizing compassion (rahmah) encourage inclusive social interaction among diverse communities. Participants and literature sources indicate that many Iraqi religious

leaders, educators, and community organizations promote values of empathy, cooperation, and humanitarian solidarity despite social and political tensions. Islamic teachings concerning mutual respect and justice contribute positively to reducing hostility and strengthening communication among different social groups. Qur'anic principles emphasizing that human diversity is part of God's creation encourage communities to appreciate differences rather than perceive diversity as a threat. Such values become especially important in post-conflict societies where distrust and social fragmentation remain significant challenges.

The study also reveals that the values of moderation (*wasathiyah*) within Islam contribute significantly to countering extremism and sectarian polarization in Iraq. Extremist ideologies often exploit religious identity to justify violence, intolerance, and exclusion against individuals or communities with different beliefs or sectarian affiliations. However, Islamic teachings of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* reject violence, hatred, and excessive behavior because Islam fundamentally promotes peace, justice, and mercy for all creation. According to Esposito (2011), Islamic civilization historically developed through intellectual openness, coexistence, and multicultural interaction rather than exclusivism or hostility toward diversity. This finding demonstrates that moderate Islamic discourse can function as an important mechanism for preventing radicalization and strengthening social stability.

Another important finding concerns the role of Islamic education in transmitting and implementing humanitarian Islamic values within multicultural Iraqi society. Educational institutions such as schools, universities, pesantren, and religious centers possess strategic roles in promoting tolerance, social ethics, and intercultural understanding among younger generations. Participants emphasized that inclusive Islamic education encouraging dialogue, empathy, and peaceful coexistence helps reduce sectarian prejudice and strengthen national identity. Educational programs integrating Islamic ethical teachings with multicultural awareness contribute positively to social integration and conflict prevention. Abdullah (2020) explains that multicultural Islamic education should encourage students to understand diversity as part of social reality requiring mutual respect and cooperation.

The findings further indicate that interfaith dialogue and community cooperation represent important practical implementations of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* values within Iraqi society. Various religious and civil society organizations in Iraq have initiated interfaith communication programs, humanitarian cooperation, and reconciliation activities involving Muslims, Christians, Yazidis, and other

communities. These initiatives aim to rebuild trust, reduce prejudice, and strengthen peaceful relations among groups affected by historical conflict and social trauma. Participants explained that dialogue activities create opportunities for communities to communicate directly, share experiences, and develop collective commitment toward peace and coexistence. Such initiatives demonstrate that Islamic humanitarian values can contribute practically to peacebuilding and reconciliation processes.

The study also found that social solidarity and humanitarian assistance constitute important dimensions of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin implementation in Iraq. During periods of conflict and humanitarian crisis, many Islamic organizations and local communities provided aid, shelter, healthcare, and educational support for displaced individuals regardless of religious or ethnic background. This humanitarian response reflects Islamic teachings emphasizing compassion, social responsibility, and protection of vulnerable populations. Islamic ethical principles encouraging care for the poor, oppressed, and marginalized groups contribute positively to strengthening social resilience and humanitarian cooperation within multicultural societies.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that Iraqi society possesses strong historical traditions of multicultural coexistence despite contemporary social tensions. Historically, Iraq functioned as a center of Islamic civilization where diverse religious and ethnic communities interacted through scholarship, trade, culture, and intellectual exchange. Baghdad during the Abbasid era became one of the world's most important centers of multicultural learning and scientific development. This historical experience demonstrates that coexistence and cultural interaction are deeply rooted within Iraqi civilization. Participants indicated that revitalizing these historical values may help strengthen contemporary peacebuilding and social integration efforts.

However, despite these positive implementations, the study identifies several major challenges affecting the realization of Rahmatan lil 'Alamin values within Iraqi multicultural life. One significant challenge involves prolonged sectarian conflict and political instability. Political competition, armed violence, terrorism, and foreign intervention have intensified social polarization and weakened trust among communities. Sectarian identity is frequently politicized within social and political conflicts, creating divisions between Sunni and Shi'a communities as well as tensions involving ethnic and religious minorities. Haddad (2011) explains that sectarianism

in Iraq developed not only through religious differences but also through political and social processes affecting national identity and social relations.

Another important challenge concerns the influence of extremist ideologies and radical religious narratives. Extremist groups often manipulate religious texts selectively to justify intolerance and violence against individuals with different beliefs or sectarian affiliations. Such interpretations contradict the Islamic principles of compassion, justice, and coexistence emphasized within *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*. Participants explained that misinformation, hate speech, and sectarian propaganda spread through digital media further intensify social tensions and prejudice. Consequently, strengthening moderate religious discourse and ethical digital communication becomes increasingly necessary within contemporary Iraqi society.

The findings additionally reveal that social trauma resulting from war, displacement, terrorism, and violence continues to affect intercommunal relations in Iraq. Many communities experience psychological wounds, distrust, and fear due to historical conflict and humanitarian crises. Such trauma may hinder reconciliation processes and create obstacles for rebuilding social cooperation. Therefore, implementing *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* values requires not only theological understanding but also psychosocial healing, community dialogue, and long-term peacebuilding efforts.

Economic inequality and social injustice similarly represent significant challenges affecting multicultural coexistence in Iraq. Poverty, unemployment, unequal access to public services, and corruption often contribute to social dissatisfaction and intergroup tension. Participants indicated that economic hardship may increase vulnerability to radicalization and identity-based conflict, particularly among marginalized youth populations. Islamic teachings concerning justice (*adl*), social welfare, and equitable resource distribution therefore remain highly relevant for addressing structural problems contributing to social instability.

Another important finding concerns the role of leadership in implementing Islamic humanitarian values within multicultural societies. Religious leaders, educators, policymakers, and community figures significantly influence public attitudes regarding diversity, tolerance, and coexistence. Ethical leadership promoting dialogue, justice, and inclusivity contributes positively to social harmony and conflict prevention. Conversely, political or religious leaders promoting sectarian narratives may intensify polarization and social hostility. The study therefore emphasizes the importance of developing leadership grounded in Islamic ethical principles of compassion, fairness, and social responsibility.

The study also demonstrates that globalization and digital communication create both opportunities and challenges for multicultural interaction in Iraq. Social media platforms facilitate communication and intercultural exchange but may simultaneously spread misinformation, hate speech, and extremist narratives rapidly. Participants explained that young people are particularly influenced by online religious discourse and digital identity politics. Consequently, strengthening digital literacy and ethical communication based on Islamic humanitarian values becomes essential for preventing online radicalization and promoting constructive social interaction.

In addition, women and youth emerged as important actors in promoting multicultural coexistence and peacebuilding within Iraqi society. Female community leaders, educators, and youth organizations increasingly participate in dialogue initiatives, humanitarian programs, and social campaigns encouraging tolerance and cooperation among diverse communities. Their involvement demonstrates that peacebuilding and implementation of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* values require participation from all sectors of society rather than relying solely on political or religious elites.

The findings further reveal that integrating Islamic values with democratic principles and inclusive citizenship contributes positively to strengthening national unity within multicultural societies. Islamic teachings emphasizing justice, equality, and respect for human dignity support inclusive social participation regardless of ethnic or religious background. Participants emphasized that citizenship should be based on shared humanitarian and national values rather than sectarian identity alone. Such perspectives may help strengthen social integration and reduce identity-based discrimination within Iraqi society.

Overall, the discussion demonstrates that Islamic values of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* possess significant relevance for promoting multicultural coexistence, social harmony, and peacebuilding in Iraq. Compassion, tolerance, moderation, justice, and humanitarian solidarity provide important ethical foundations for addressing sectarian conflict and strengthening social integration. However, successful implementation requires continuous efforts involving education, ethical leadership, interfaith dialogue, digital literacy, social justice, and institutional commitment. Through revitalization of Islamic humanitarian teachings and collaborative peacebuilding efforts, multicultural Iraqi society possesses strong potential to develop more peaceful, inclusive, and harmonious national life.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that the implementation of Islamic values of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* plays a crucial role in strengthening multicultural coexistence, social harmony, and peacebuilding within Iraqi society. The concept of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*, which emphasizes compassion, justice, tolerance, moderation, and respect for human dignity, provides important ethical foundations for managing diversity and addressing social tensions in multicultural environments. In Iraq, where ethnic, religious, and sectarian diversity forms a central aspect of national life, these Islamic humanitarian values remain highly relevant for promoting peaceful coexistence and rebuilding social trust after prolonged conflict and instability.

The findings reveal that Islamic teachings encouraging mercy, inclusivity, social solidarity, and ethical interaction contribute positively to reducing sectarian hostility and strengthening communication among diverse communities. Educational institutions, religious leaders, community organizations, and interfaith dialogue initiatives play important roles in transmitting and implementing these values within society. Inclusive Islamic education promoting tolerance and multicultural understanding also contributes significantly to preventing radicalization and strengthening social integration among younger generations.

The study additionally highlights that humanitarian assistance, social cooperation, and reconciliation efforts based on Islamic ethical principles have helped support vulnerable communities affected by war, displacement, and social conflict. Historical experiences of multicultural coexistence within Iraqi civilization further demonstrate that diversity and intercultural interaction are deeply rooted within Iraqi society and can become important foundations for future peacebuilding efforts.

However, several challenges continue to affect the implementation of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* values, including sectarian polarization, political instability, extremism, social trauma, economic inequality, and the spread of hate narratives through digital media. Consequently, strengthening moderate Islamic discourse, ethical leadership, digital literacy, social justice, and community participation remains essential for promoting sustainable social harmony and inclusive citizenship.

Overall, this study emphasizes that Islamic humanitarian values possess significant potential for supporting reconciliation, multicultural coexistence, and national unity in Iraq. By revitalizing the principles of compassion, justice, and peaceful coexistence within social, educational, and political life, Iraqi society can contribute toward developing a more inclusive, stable, and harmonious multicultural future.

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